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Community-Engagement Grants: Fostering Partnerships and Advancing Scholarship and Human Well-Being

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Community-Engagement Grants: Fostering Partnerships and Advancing Scholarship and Human Well-Being

Abstract

This preliminary report presents how Virginia Commonwealth University creates a culture of community engagement, facilitates university-community partnerships and how seed grant money can be a catalyst for long-term partnerships.

Keywords

grant, community engagement, partnerships, community

Disciplines

Higher Education



VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Impact of Community Engagement
Grants (2007-2012):
A Preliminary Report

Virginia Commonwealth University

- Urban, research university
- 31,000 students
- Academic medical center
- #1 public art school
- No football team, but cool basketball coach!

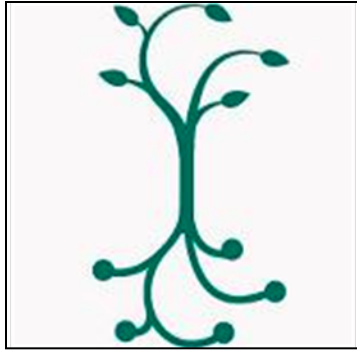
VCU's Quest for Distinction

Theme IV: Become a national model for community engagement and regional impact

- **Expand community engaged scholarship and service learning.**
- **Create** university-community partnerships with a focus on the key targeted areas of:
 - K-12 Education
 - Access to Health
 - Economic Development
 - Sustainability
- **Provide** strategic leadership in addressing sustainability challenges through curricular and service innovations and green facilities and operations.



Recognition for Community Engagement



Recognized as 1 of 40 top community-engaged institutions by the Carnegie foundation

President's Higher Education Service Honor Roll, with highest distinction



CTSA Clinical & Translational[®]
Science Awards

Recipient of a CTSA grant



VCU

Division of Community Engagement

Vision

VCU is a community of engaged citizens, working together changing lives.

Mission

The VCU Division of Community Engagement mobilizes university-community partnerships that generate innovative solutions to societal challenges and prepares the engaged citizens of tomorrow.



Council for Community Engagement

- Builds a network of contacts across units
- Disseminates information and resources
- Gathers information from the community on critical needs and opportunities
- Recognizes accomplishments of university-community partnerships
- Oversees the grant program
- Promotes CE opportunities

Questions

- How do we create a culture of community engagement?
- How do we facilitate university-community partnerships?
- Can seed grant money be a catalyst for long-term partnerships?

Grants: Purpose & Background

- Funds from the Offices of the Provost and the Vice President for Health Sciences (\$100,000)
- Provides one-year seed grants up to \$20,000
- Supports and encourages community-university partnerships
- Creatively addresses community-identified needs with interdisciplinary approaches
- Advances community engaged scholarship

History

- Program began during 2007-2008
- From 2007-2014, 51 grants have been awarded
- Approximately \$700,000 has been awarded
- [Funded Projects](#) have supported
 - K-12 education,
 - Access to health,
 - Sustainability and
 - Economic development

Application Process

- Information sessions
- Online application
- Applications reviewed by Council committee
- Finalists interviewed with community partner
- Awarded in May at a community celebration
- Projects presented at subsequent May celebration
- Final report and follow-up surveys

CCE Grants Impact (2007-2012)

Data collected from Pls:

- Final reports
- Follow-up surveys

Next steps:

- Survey of community partners
- Analysis of combined impact and comparison of perspectives

Response Rate

- Complete data for 20 grants
- 52.6% response rate

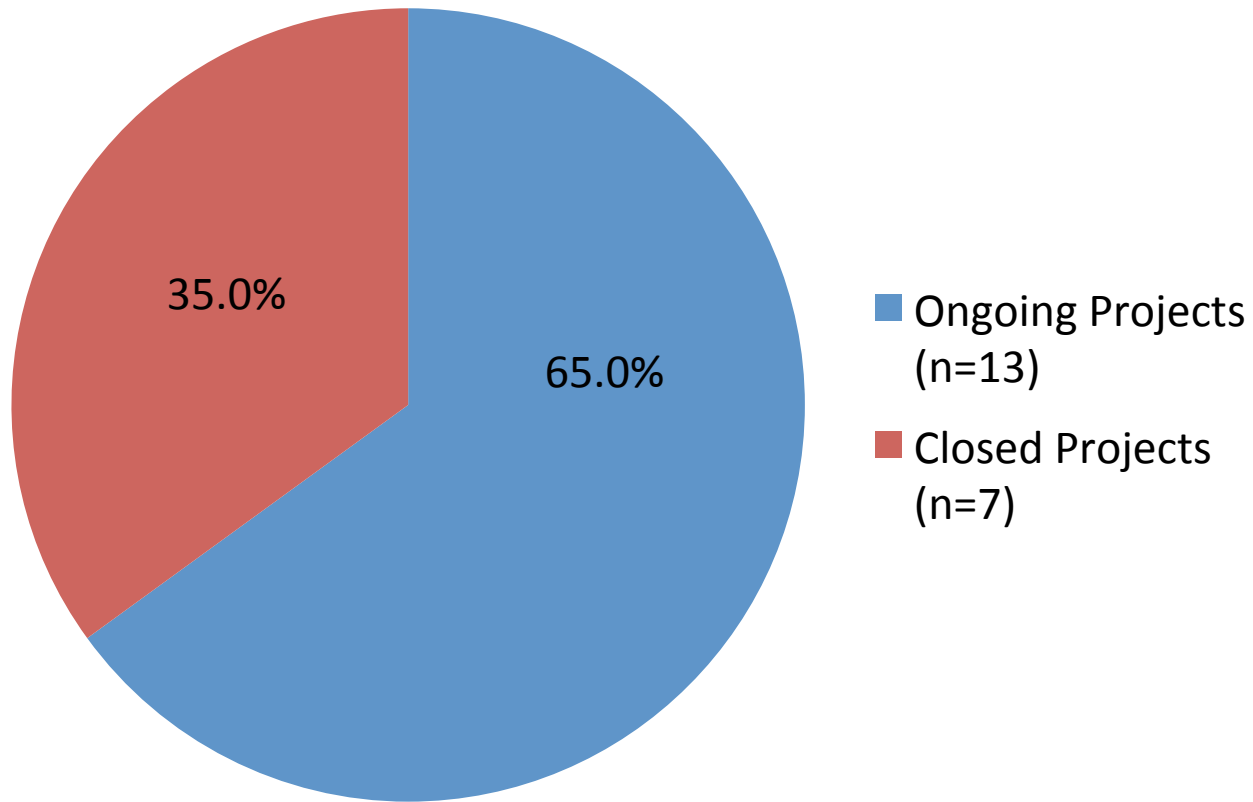
CCE Grant Year	# Grantees	# Reports
2007-2008	9	5
2008-2009	8	6
2009-2010	8	3
2010-2011	7	3*
2011-2012	6	3*
TOTAL	38	20

*Only reports with complete data are in count

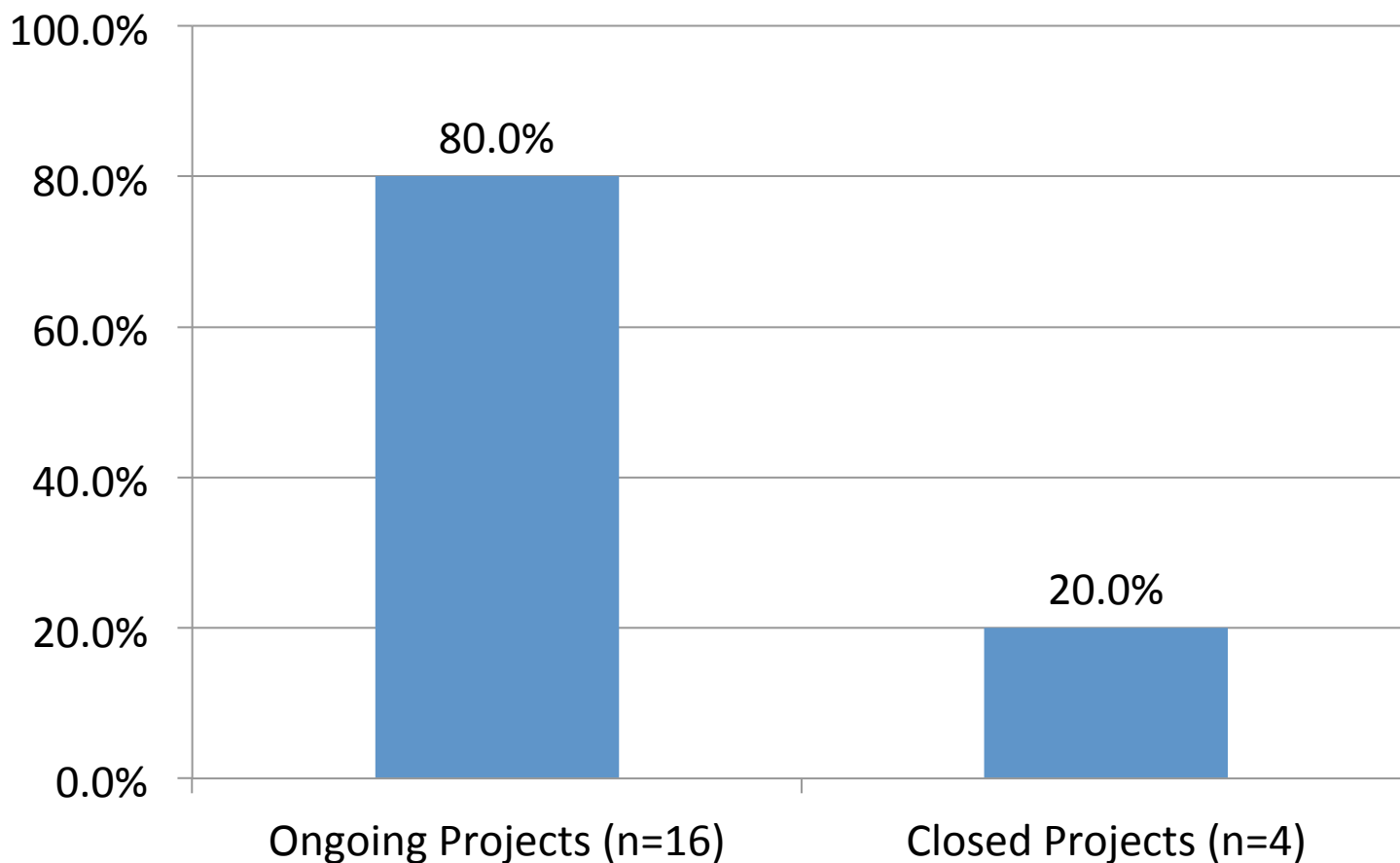
Key Findings

- Majority of projects (65%) are ongoing
- 20% of closed projects still maintain a relationship with their partners
- Students are primarily engaged through service-learning
- Scholarship generated is primarily articles and presentations
- PIs leverage this grant to obtain additional internal and external funding support

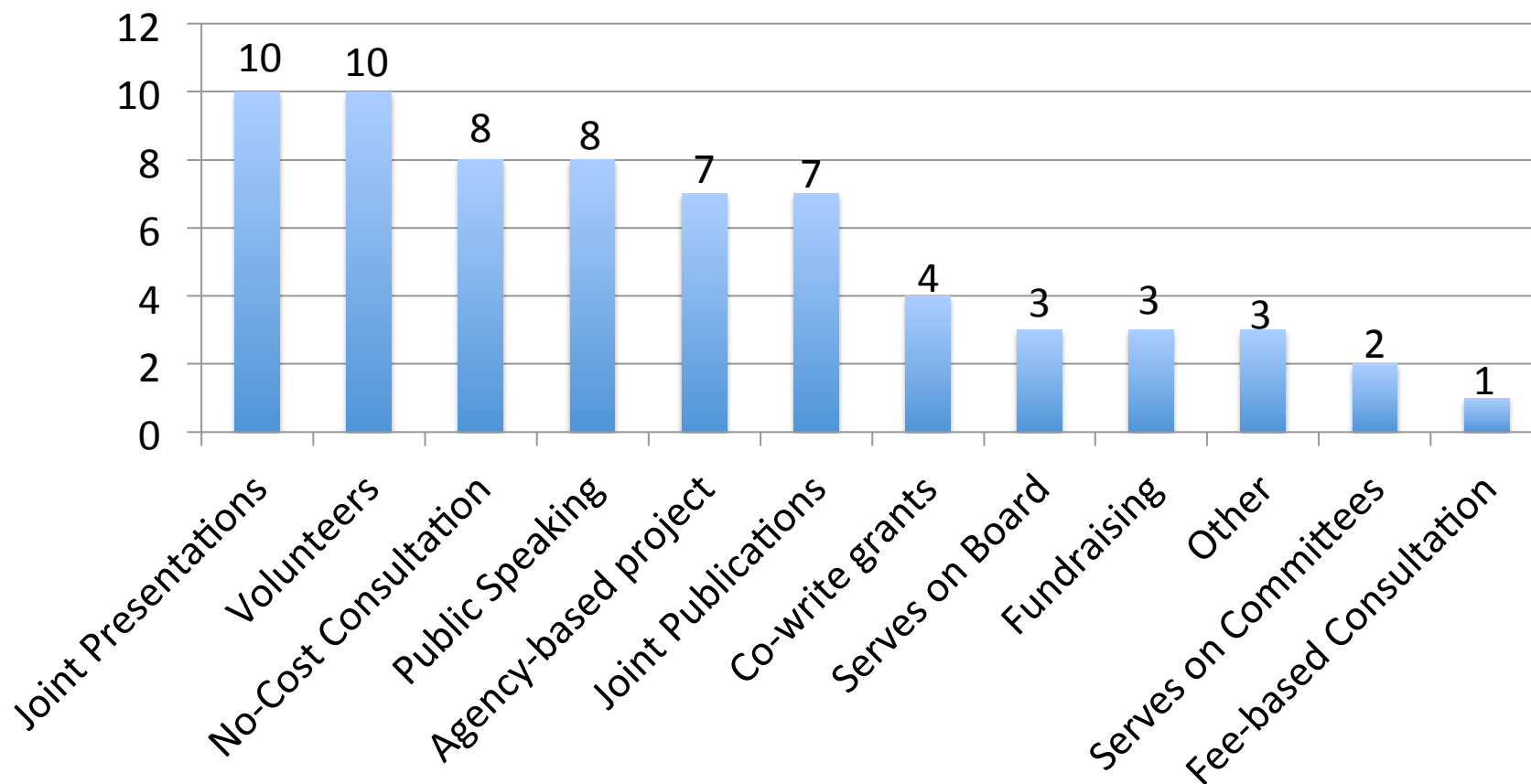
Status of the Projects (n=20)



Maintained a Relationship After Grant Period (n=20)



Faculty Contributions to Ongoing Partnerships (n=16)

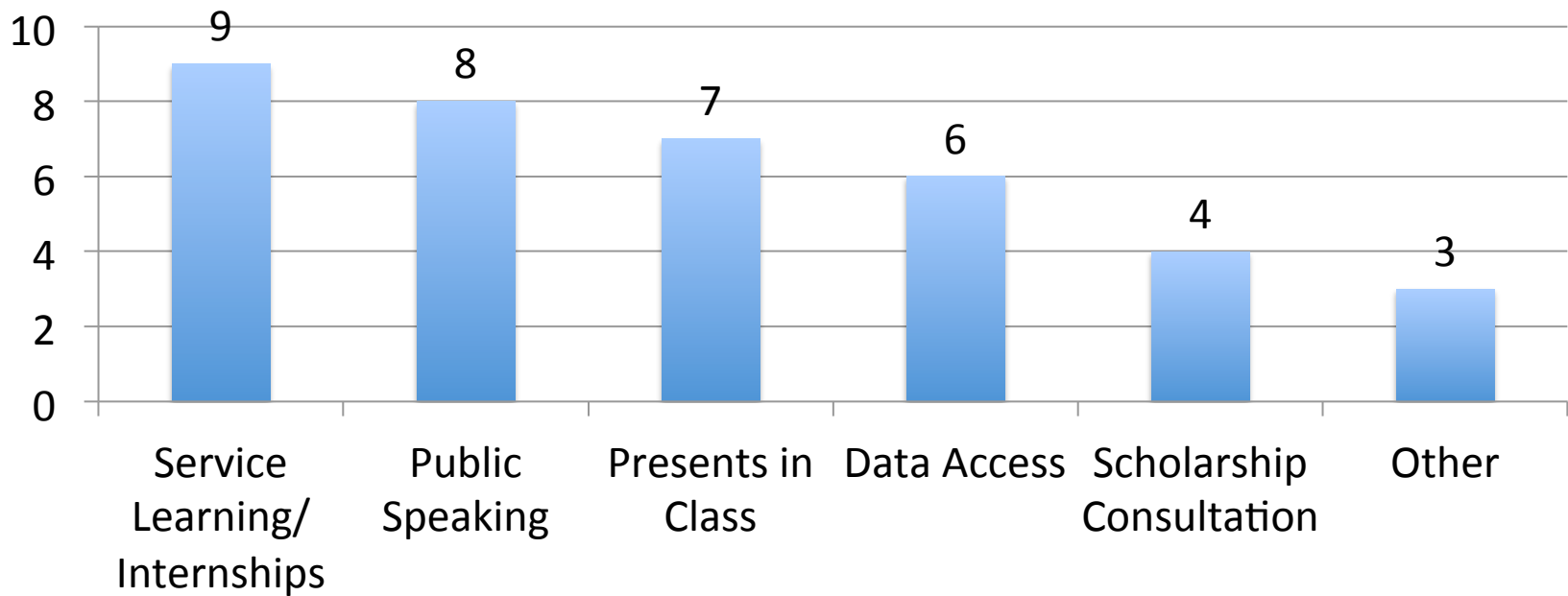


VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Make it real.

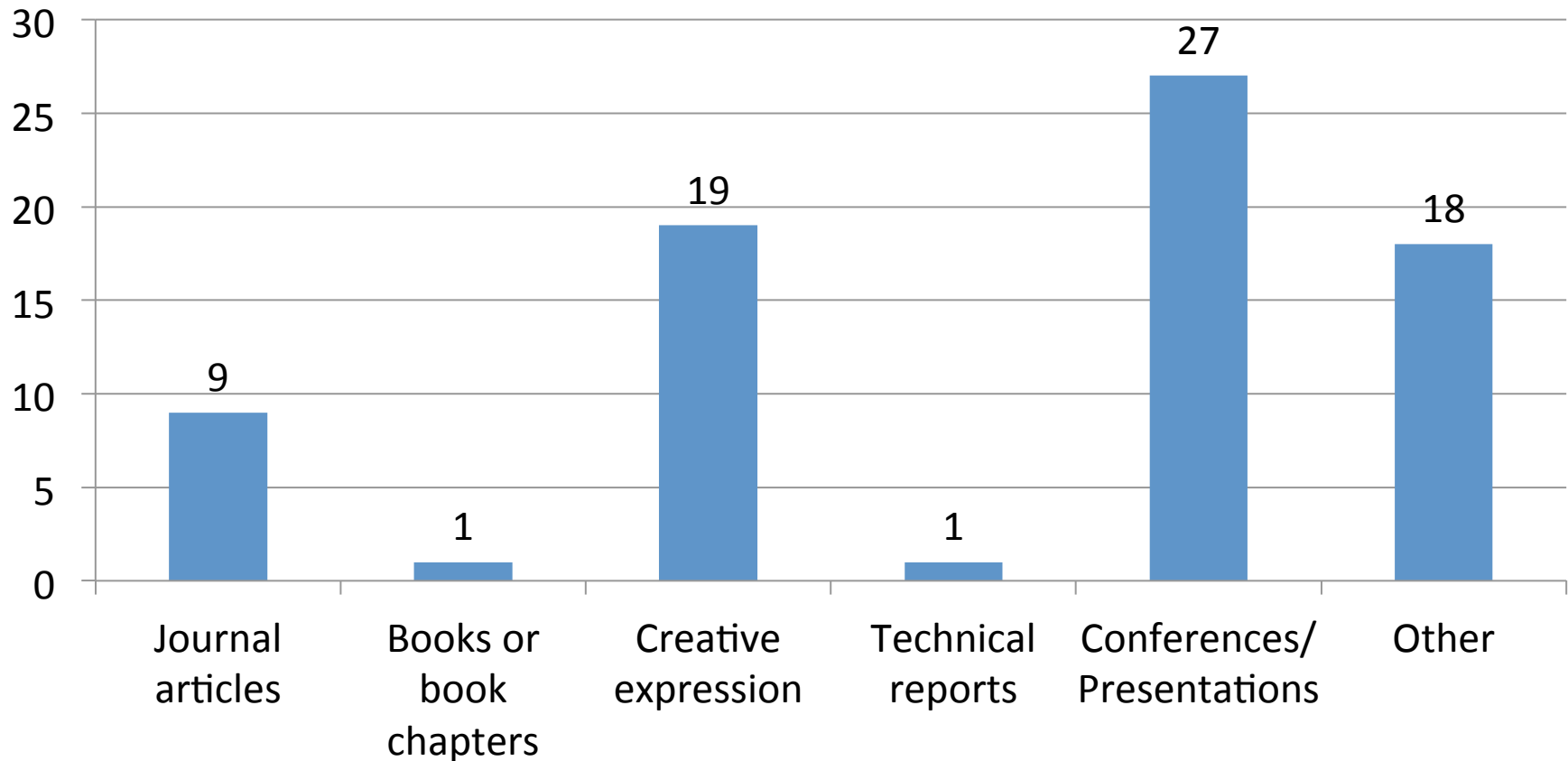
Community Member Contributions to Ongoing Partnerships (n=16)



Financial Sustainability

- No match required, but many PIs report additional in-kind and cash contributions to support the funded project
- Of the 20 reports, 5 projects received additional funding (\$213,000 from external sources)
- Sources have been federal grants, private and corporate foundations and other VCU sources

Contribution to Faculty Scholarship (n=16)

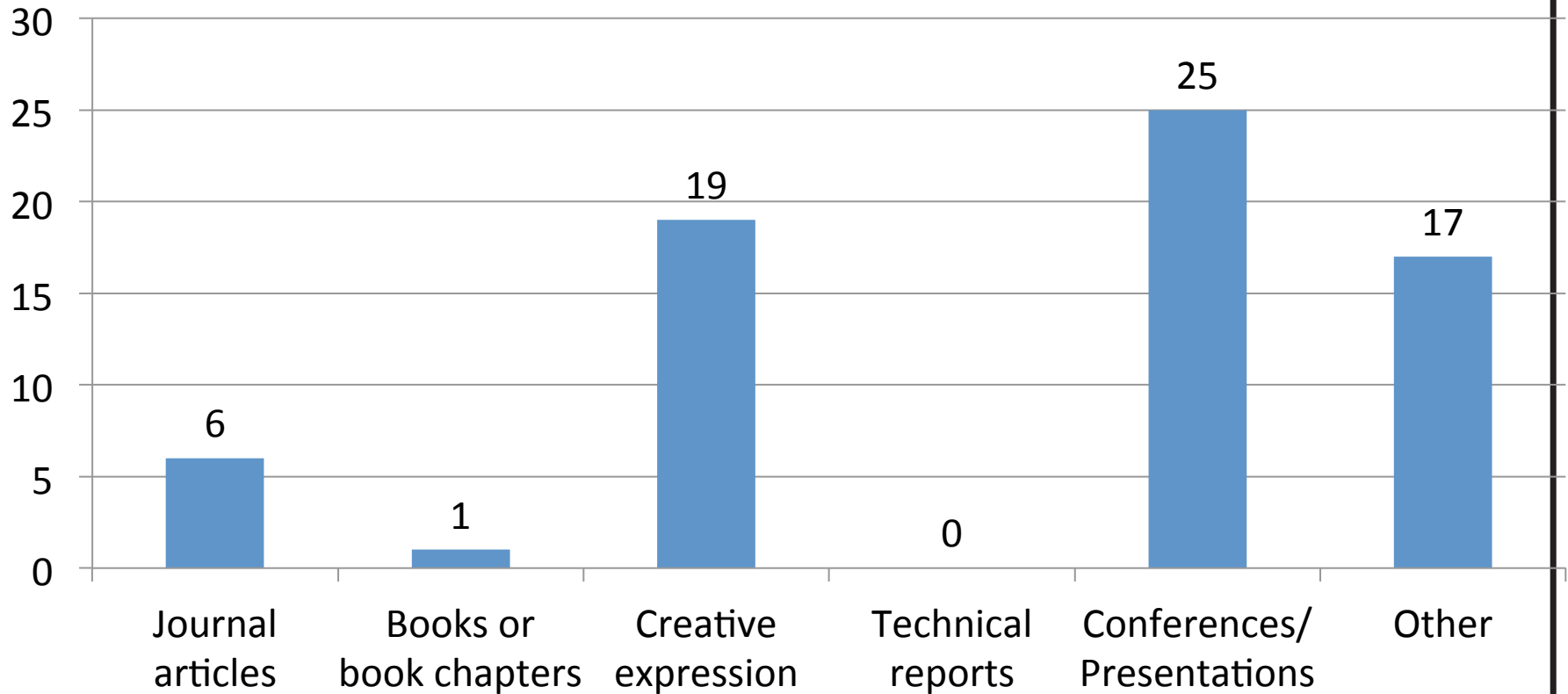


Areas of Student Involvement

(10 of 13 ongoing projects)

Activity	Undergraduates	Graduates	TOTAL
Independent Study/Research	15	8	23
Paid member of project team	4	2	6
Work study/Graduate assistant	0	1	1
Service learning	290	96	386
Internship, practicum, field placement	49	19	68
Other	13	105	118
TOTAL	371	231	602

Contribution to Student Scholarship



Reflections on Impact

- Involvement of community partners in all stages of the projects
- Impact on the VCU culture and Richmond community
- Encouragement of interdisciplinary work
- 70 different VCU units have participated
- Development of models for engaged teaching, research, and service
- Growing number of faculty with expertise in community engaged scholarship

Questions

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Division of Community Engagement

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